DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 189 744 EC 124 257

AUTHOR Laneve, Ronald S.
TITLE Presentation: National Association of Secondary School Principals (Miami, Florida, January 11, 1980).
INSTITUTION Montgomery County Public Schools, Rockville, Md.
PUB DATE 11 Jan 80
NOTE 20p.

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Adolescents: *Antisocial Behavior: *Behavior Change: *Behavior Problems: *Change Strategies: *Discipline Problems: Family Influence: Parent Influence: *Principals: *School Role: Secondary Education

ABSTRACT

Presented at the 1980 meeting of the National Association of Secondary School Principals, the paper discusses how to deal with disruptive students. Aspects considered include the role of schools in America, a look through the student's eyes, the parent and family, and the educator's role. Several techniques that have been successful in working with disruptive students are described, including defining what can and cannot be changed, determining what else is going on in the student's life, communicating with the student, teaching the student to deal with conflict, extending special school privileges to disruptive students, and getting a firm commitment from the student. (DLS)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED189744

U S DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

FEB 2 2 1980

Presentation:

National Association of Secondary School Principals

January 11, 1980, Miami, Florida

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Ronald S Laneve

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

Dr. Ronald S. Laneve, Principal
Mark Twain School
Montgomery County Public Schools
Rockville, Maryland

EC124257

This article will deal with four specific areas in addressing successful techniques for working with disruptive students. These four areas are: the role of schools in America; a look through the student's eyes; the parent and family; and finally, the educator's role.

In looking at the role of schools in our country, we should first glance back at the Jeffersonian era. At that time, there was much controversy about whether education was for everyone, or for a select few. At that point in our history, we made a decision as a nation that education was for all people, not for a select group. If we move ahead in history to the early 1900's, we find that our schools became melting pots--places where children of many ethnic groups could meet and learn to live together. This was, of course, happening in the society at large, but the schools were the only place where children coming from diverse backgrounds met and mingled each and every day in very large numbers.

During the Depression, laws were enacted to take children out of the labor market. Educators of our country played an important role in developing stringent child labor laws. More recently, the schools have also had to deal with larger societal issues, among them the issue of integration. As we have moved away from separate schools, our society has also attempted to eliminate discrimination based on race. Once again, the schools have had a key role to play in social as well as educational issues. Most recently we have been attempting to integrate handicapped individuals into our society, and once again, by the enactment of Public Law 94-142, the schools are impacted by changes in society. Every change that affects our society also affects our schools.

The number one problem in our schools today, based on many nationwide surveys, is discipline. The problem of discipline can be related to some startling statistics: Every day 8,000 people are jailed for their first offense. More than 7,000 of those first offenders, or 88 percent, are

children. Each year in New York, 200 prostitutes are murdered. The startling fact is that for the most part these are teenage girls who are murdered by their pimps. The suicide rate among adolescents has increased at an alarming rate, much more so than in any other age group. There have been many changes in our society, and there is no doubt that discipline is the number one problem in our schools. Why do students hate school? Students hate school because that is where they fail.

A noted psychiatrist, Dr. William Glasser, has pointed out that children do not receive much criticism until they enter school. Let's think about failure for a minute. Can you think back to something you failed at? Let's assume that you went to a room with a group of people and were given a test and you failed. What would be your attitude about that room and the people in it? Failure is not something that any of us like. Why should children be any different? Children who are failing in school do not like schools because that is where they are failing. School reminds them of their inadequacies.

It is also important to realize that the people who work in our schools are not people who have failed in school. Most of us went into education because schools were places we were successful. Another factor supported by recent research is that many people go into education as an attempt to get power. You might ask yourself what power a teacher or principal has. If you look through a student's eyes, our power is tremendous. Why do some kids make it and some not? In London a study was conducted recently to try to determine why some children turn out to be successful adults when every important factor that could be considered in their childhoods seemed to have been negative. The findings concluded that one significant adult in the lives of these children had made the difference; and the most frequent person that the children talked about was an educator. How important we are! How important our profession is!

Prior to one of my recent presentations to a group of educators, I asked one participant, "What do you do?" The person responded, "Oh, I'm just a teacher." I thought, "'Just a teacher'!" The way the teacher seemed to apologize indicated that he certainly did not feel good about his profession.

On a clear day rise and look around you; what you will see will astound you. There is no more important profession in the world than that of an educator, because the products of our work will determine the future of the world. Unlike others, we are not working with the things of today or yesterday. We are working with individuals who will determine what this world is to become. In the words of a well-known song, "I Believe the Children Are Our Future." Our job is to help them laugh, and love, and learn--to help them find the way.

Probably the most important task we have with children is teaching them to love themselves, for this is the greatest love of all. Students who are disruptive do not love themselves. Many of them are suffering from what I refer to as the "invisible" handicap. Have you ever gone to a school that serves children who have a physical handicap? Their handicap is visible. When I go in, my heart goes out to those children. To me, it doesn't matter what it costs; give them what they need because I can see that they are not nearly so fortunate as I. On the other hand, have you ever experienced working all night on a lesson plan, trying to put something special together for one particularly disruptive student, and when you present it, getting the response, "Fuck you, lady. I'm not doing this shit. You can shove it up your ass." Does your heart go out to that person? Do you say to yourself, "I don't care what is costs; give him whatever he needs because I can see his handicap"?

More of our children in schools are being labeled emotionally disturbed. What is an emotionally disturbed person? Karen Horney has stated that emotional disturbance must be considered in context. Determination of emotional disturbance is based on what is considered normal in a given society. What is normal in our society may be emotionally disturbed behavior in another. What is emotionally disturbed behavior in school, and what role does the family play? Why do boys account for over 90 percent of the students who are labeled emotionally disturbed? How do we separate those who are emotionally disturbed from those who are "streetwise" or those who have not had the tender, loving, and nurturing care that most individuals seem to need?

In our society at this time there is a tendency to label people as criminally insane. Frequently, these are individuals who have never accepted the responsibility for their own behavior; society's excuse for this behavior is the assignation of the label "criminally insane". Dr. William Glasser has taken the approach that we are responsible for our own behavior, and that everyone has the ability to be responsible for his/her behavior. Dr. Glasser will admit that there have been many changes in our society, including a decline in the importance of the family unit, divorce, working parents, increased use of mass communications, greater travel and individual mobility. However, none of these factors are reasons not to accept the responsibility of making choices or the responsibility for our own actions.

How do our children become emotionally disturbed? Poor parents, poor teachers, bad luck? When we talk about the kids who are disruptive in school, I think it is important to realize that we are talking about children who have been rejected by their parents, rejected by the schools, and, in fact, rejected by our society. The very nature of their handicap makes it extremely difficult to provide them with help. When you attempt to provide help, the first reactions you will get are anger, distrust, and hostility. It is just as difficult for a child who has never experienced love to recognize and accept feelings of warmth and understanding as it is for a child who has always known warmth and understanding to manifest feelings of hostility and aggression.

The fact that adolescent suicide is increasing at such a fantastic rate indicates the unhappiness in the adolescent age-group. Dr. Julius Segal of the National Institutes of Mental Health reports that 15 percent of these children--8,000,000 children--require care for emotional disorders. These disruptive children are seeking supportive relationships, like any other individual. They are making bad decisions in these relationships, they are making decisions that are not in their best interests; but they are seeking relationships. What can be the effect of not having loving relationships? Research from John's Hopkins University in Baltimore, Maryland

indicates that students in homes where abuse is prevalent not only suffer emotional scars that last a lifetime, but suffer from what is called "psychological dwarfism." Their growth is stunted by the fact that they live in a hostile environment where they are constantly abused. When taken out of this environment, it has been found that not only has their growth returned to a normal rate, but there have been significant gains in their intelligence. As educators, I think we must keep in mind that it doesn't take alot of people. One significant person in a student's life can make a tremendous difference--one significant person to help a student move from immature, irresponsible behavior to a pattern of mature and responsible behavior.

Dr. Glasser states that preventive programs are acts of good management and wise investments. How much money and how much time do we put into preventive programs? Are we investing enough in education? Last year the budget for the Office of Education was twelve billion dollars. The Department of Defense budget was 135 billion dollars. Not only do we not spend enough on education, but if you want to try something different in education, you must first prove that it is going to be better. Better than what? It is not easy to answer that question because of the difficulty of measuring what is being done contemporaneously.

Yet, as we look at the schools, I think we must admit that we do some very stupid things in education, using methods that money alone will not solve. For example, when a student is truant, we suspend him. Truant behavior tells us the student doesn't want to be in school, and yet our punishment (or our remedy) is to suspend and give him more of what he sought by displaying poor behavior. Dr. Glasser indicates that punishment and laws only work with honest people. I think we could conclude from Glasser that suspending a student who has been truant will not be effective.

In working with disruptive students, one of the first steps is to have the student acknowledge his behavior. A second step is to make him feel powerful. A "bad" kid, a disruptive kid, may look like a powerful force to you and to your staff; however, if you could climb inside that student's head and truly see how he sees himself, you would see that he considers himself to be powerless. Keep in mind that mature, responsible people "do it" to

the world. They take action. Immature, irresponsible people perceive that the world is "doing it" to them. As an example of this, I am thinking of Joan, a girl who came to us recently from a local school, where she was seen as an extremely powerful and dangerous person. She was hostile, aggressive, and not afraid to physically strike out at the principal or assistant principal; a truly powerful person. We have been working with Joan for quite some time. I don't know how much progress we have made; I don't have any success story to share with you, but from talking with her and watching her operate in our school, I can tell you that she does not see herself as a powerful person.

Let's look at another student, John. John is a truly powerless person, a person who is asking for help. His mother would not let him accept responsiblity for his own behavior. After John was alleged to have killed a little girl who was teasing him, Mother defended him with the best lawyer she could find. John was not able to acknowledge his own behavior, nor was he able to get any help for himself. He got legal help; he needed other help. Eventually, John struck out again. This time he killed an adult male. Now that society has responded, perhaps John will be labeled criminally insane.

My point with these cases is that these children feel powerless. They do not see themselves as powerful persons and, more importantly, they never "own" their behavior. Our job in working with disruptive students is to help these kids see alternatives, always pointing out to them the choices they must make, not the choices we are making. From those alternatives, it is also our job to help them select appropriate alternatives, and to stick with them when they make inappropriate choices.

The final step in successfully working with disruptive students is the most important: teaching the students to accept the consequences of their behavior. When we talk to disruptive kids, we all get the same story no matter what section of the country we come from. The students tell us, "It was not really my fault. So-and-so made me do it," or "The teacher did this and that is why I did it," or "Something else happened and that is why I behaved the way I did." These are all examples of students not accepting

responsibility for their behavior. Once the student begins to "own" his behavior, it is also important to give him immediate feedback. Do you realize how hard it would be if you had gone around throughout your lifetime hitting out every time something frustrated you, and you attempted to change that behavior? Let's assume you worked at it very hard, and you succeeded in changing that behavior. Instead of hitting people, you now end up by calling them a "mother fucker". How much of a reward do you think you would get for this significant change in behavior? My point is that when working with disruptive students, we must provide them with small steps for changing their behavior, we must recognize their progress, and we also must provide them with frequent feedback related to their progress. It is very hard to measure the progress a disruptive student is making because he may be progressing from being very disruptive to being just a little disruptive.

What is the role of parents? We have talked about the role of schools in our society; we have talked a bit about the children. What about parents? First of all, we must realize that there have never been courses to help us learn to become parents. Although we have had many years of education--education related to child development--I would doubt that any of us have taken a course either at the bachelor's, master's, or doctoral level to teach us how to be parents. One certain axiom of child-rearing is that what works with one child won't work with another. When we talk about any child, many times the attitudes and the behaviors we see in them are reflections of the attitudes and behaviors of the parents. We can reject a student's behavior, but as educators we must accept the responsibility to get involved and work with parents to try to facilitate communication with them, to create a trusting and cooperative relationship. The training of educators is extremely limited in the area of working effectively with parents.

We must reach out to parents. We must develop two-way communication. We cannot afford to say, "That is the way the parent is, so what can you expect of the child." Nothing will change unless we can find a way to reach out to the parents, gain their trust and confidence, and help them see the need for changing their child's behavior. Many times we work against extremely difficult odds. In many communities across the country, the accepted norm of behavior includes disruptive children within the school, or

children in trouble with the law. We have communities like this in our county, and I am sure you do, too.

Among several recent changes in the family unit, we find that many parents are experiencing separation and divorce. We find in many families both parents are working. These changes often result in less support, less time for the children. Concomitantly, our schools are dealing with an increasing number of disruptive students. However, a study by NIMH indicates that the single parent is not the source of disruptive kids. Too frequently in our schools we refer to the single parent as the problem. The problem the NIMH study identified is distress within the family; distress is not limited to the single parent family. As a matter of fact, when distress is present in a family, divorce or separation may be one of the best solutions to eliminating distress.

In addition to divorce and other problems affecting the family, there is also on the part of some parents an abdication of the parental role. In particular, I can cite the case of a fourteen year-old girl who was given permission by her parents to live with her nineteen year-old boyfriend. We became involved with the problem because the boyfriend lived outside the county. The parents were simply asking if the child could continue coming to school while living with her boyfriend outside our county. In this case the parents had clearly abdicated their role and were allowing a nineteen year-old boyfriend to assume total responsiblity for their daughter. Is it any wonder some of our kids turn out the way they do?

I would like to share another example of the parenting role. A student in our school was living with his mother and father. The father killed the mother. The student was then transferred to live with his sister, then with an uncle, then with the grandparents, and finally to a series of four or five different foster homes. The final residence for this individual was a detention center. I share these examples with you not to excuse the behavior of these disruptive students, but to help us understand and put into perspective what the lives of these disruptive students are like.

How do the students get that way? What is the role of the school? What is the role of the parent? What is the role of our society? What can we do about it in our schools? What are some successful techniques for working with disruptive students? I am not going to attempt to define the difference between an emotionally disturbed student and a streetwise student or a disruptive student, or any other label that may be chosen. Following are some techniques that have been successful in working with students who do not "own" their behaviors and who demonstrate immature, irresponsible behaviors.

The first step is to define what you can and cannot change. We have attempted to do that with what we have termed the "change variables". If a student's father and mother are alcoholics, we cannot change that. The change variables attempt to define for us the things we feel we can change that would make a difference toward a student achieving success in school; for example, emotional control, respect for authority, task orientation, etc. I am not suggesting that you use our change variables; I am suggesting that you spend time defining what your staff and you believe you could change. Once that task is completed, begin with one objective leading toward that goal. Here again, it should be something in which the school personnel can make a difference; but make it a very small step. For example, if a student has not been attending school, don't make the objective to have the student attend school. Perhaps the objective would be to have him or her there one day per week. If the student is losing emotional control fifteen or twenty times per week, make the initial objective to reduce that number to ten, not to extinguish the behavior.

There are some definite indications that we in education can have a significant impact on children provided we devote ample time to what we are attempting to change, and set high expectations for the students. Research indicates that time and expectations are the two most important factors in determining the success of students in any particular area--the amount of time we put into it, and the expectations that we have for student performance. This certainly applies to students who demonstrate disruptive or deviant behavior. As we work with these students, we must realize that their anger is not directed at us. Students who frequently act-out against school authorities are displaying learned behavior patterns. The are using be-

haviors that have been successful for them in the past. In their minds, being kicked out, suspended, rejected, are synonymous with success.

The change variables are an attempt on our part to define what we can and cannot change. I believe they are helpful. Another thing we do is to identify problem behaviors: when does a behavior occur; what is a clear description of the behavior; and what can we do to modify that behavior? Also a useful tool is what we call a "serious incident" form. This is a form a teacher can fill out when he or she feels that a serious incident has occurred. The form helps us to document the student's behavior, and it also helps the teachers feel a little better about the incident being recorded, someone taking an interest in what has occurred with them.

We must also "demystify" therapy. When we talk about counseling or therapy, some people turn off immediately. All I am referring to is having a cooperative, understanding, supportive relationship with another human being. There are therapeutic and nontherapeutic educational environments where there are some very good "therapists" working within our schools. It is important to demystify therapy. It is not something special that only a psychiatrist can do.

What are some of the methods and techniques that can be used in working with disruptive students? One very successful technique is to conduct a brief life-space interview. Oversimplified, the life-space interview attempts to determine at the time of a crisis what else is going on in that particular student's life in an attempt to understand the behavior or the crisis. This is extremely important because the student, like any other human being, will frequently act out, become hostile and aggressive, or make poor decisions when he is under emotional stress from some other source.

It is also important when working with disruptive students to learn how and to practice delivering "I" messages. Once again, oversimplified, an "I" message allows the individual to know what you are concerned about, but does not put him/her down. An example might be: "I become very concerned when I am attempting to teach the class and the students are fighting in the back of the room," as opposed to, "You kids stop that fighting. How

do you expect me to teach this class with all of the commotion in the back of the room?"

As we work with these youngsters, it is important for us to accept their feelings, to listen to and to hear their feelings. It is my belief that we must change behavior, or help the students change behavior before we are ever going to change their feelings. Students who are failing can talk about it, express it, but in order to change their feelings, they must begin to achieve and perceive success.

Another important learning activity for these students is to teach them to deal with conflict. That is not something we put alot of time and effort into when developing a curriculum, but conflict is something present within every school. There are very definite ways of dealing with conflict situations. In working with disruptive students, it is important never to back them into a corner. Always provide them with alternatives. An example might be, "Well, you could push me out of the way, you could write a note to the principal, or you could take your seat and we would discuss this later." A technique that doesn't work with these kids is to give them something. It is important for their self-concept that they earn whatever they receive. They earn freedom and privileges through demonstrating mature and responsible behavior. It is also important that there be clear consequences for behavior, consequences on which there is follow-through by staff. The students must understand consequences so that they can have full knowledge before they choose their behavior.

Disruptive students must understand that unless they are able to control their behavior, when their behavior is out of control the staff will control it. In extreme circumstances, physical restraint must be used as a clear example of the staff, not the student, controlling behavior. Bear in mind when using physical restraint to always have many more staff members on hand than are needed. The phrase I like is, "I don't want to fight unless I am sure I have enough power to win." This developed as a result of a small female teacher attempting to break up a fight between two very strong individuals. What we learned from that situation was that it was much more intelligent to let the two boys continue fighting while we sought enough

help to physically restrain both boys. The message is clear--if you have to resort to physical restraint, make sure you have adequate power on hand.

There are various alternatives for dealing with disruptive students: counseling, physical restraint, time out of the classroom. "Time out" can be positive--spending some additional time in the gym, or negative--sitting in the assistant principal's office. Whatever we do, it is of the utmost importance that the kids understand what the rules are, the consequences of their behavior, that they are the ones making the choices and choosing from alternatives, but most importantly, that they "own" their program. Students should be involved in setting the rules, and the rules should never include any consequences involving the loss of priviliges or points that cannot be regained. After they have made a mistake, there must always be a way for these students to earn back what they have lost.

Another clear message to set with these students is, "Don't tell me; show me. I don't want to hear, I want to see a change in your behavior." Going back to the difficulty of students making changes in their behavior, it is of critical importance when a student attempts to modify his behavior that he be given frequent feedback. It doesn't mean alot of rewards, just recognition that he is attempting to change his behavior. Often there is nothing more rewarding to a student than knowing that someone else is very interested in him, watching his progress, and pulling for him--a simple verbal pat on the back. Sometimes even when a student fails it is important to say, "I know you are trying. I can understand what happened, but I know you are trying." When working with these students, many of us fall into the trap of trying to find out why they did what they did. That is not important. What is important is to find out what they did, to have the student verbalize what he/she did. The "why" will only lead to rationalization, excuses, and wasted time. Once a student takes the step forward of "owning" his behavior, you are well on your way to helping that person make some other choices in the future.

Another strategy is to seek out the disruptive students to receive some of the privileges within the school. This is a crazy idea, isn't it? I would guess that if we went across the nation and took a survey, we would find that most of the privileges, most of the honors, most of the important

things that are done within schools go to the kids who are demonstrating mature, responsible behavior. Maybe that is how it should be, but what I am proposing is an alternative method of working with disruptive students by choosing them for things that need to be done--perhaps service on a committee, perhaps doing something to enhance the appearance of the school, and being paid for it. Find some way to say to these kids, "You are an important person, and I would like to be able to count on you."

One of the most important aspects of our school program is what we call the teacher/advisor program. In this program the teachers attempt to become the students' counselor, friend, advocate, and also disciplinarian. There are very specific steps as to how this should be achieved. The first step is to get personally involved with a student. That does not mean to attempt to become his mother or father; it means to let the student know that you are involved with him, care about him, and that you are willing to go that extra step that he didn't expect you to take. The second step is to deal with present behavior, not what the student did last week, last month, or last year, but what the student has done today, or what the student did not do in the previous class period. Deal with the behaviors of the present; forget the past. Step three--as you are dealing with this present behavior, make no value judgements. Any time the student has called the teacher a name, or hit another student, the student knows that is not acceptable behavior. It does no good for an educator to say, "Your behavior is unacceptable." The student knows that when he comes into the office. Step four is to make a definite plan to help a student change the behavior. At this point, some people will say, "What about the kids who don't want to make a plan, who do not want to change their behavior?" If they are enjoying listening to you make value judgements about their behavior or talk of dealing with their behavior of last month, or of their history of behavior, or if they feel you are not personally involved with them, they probably won't want to make a plan with you. But I can guarantee that if you follow step one, two, and three, the student will be agreeable to making a plan to modify his behavior.

The fifth step, once the plan is made, is to get a firm commitment from the student. This means a verbal, and possibly a written note, about something the student is going to attempt to do. Once again, make sure

that it is a small and possible step for the student to make. An example might be, "Yes, Mrs. Jones, I agree. I will try to sit through one English class with Mrs. Harris without calling her a name." If the student meets the commitment, the problem has been solved. On the other hand, if the student does not meet the commitment, then step six comes into play. Step six is to accept no excuses. This means you do not want to talk about why the student did not meet or fulfill his commitment. Excuses are not acceptable. If you are not going to accept excuses, what are you going to do? You go back to step four, or perhaps step two. You deal with present behavior; you do not make a value judgement about it; and you attempt to agree with another plan. You attempt to get another commitment. You continue doing this until the student is successful, never accepting any excuse for failure. The message to the student is--you made a commitment to me and you did not fulfill it.

Step seven is also relevant: Never give up. Never is a long, long time. Perhaps it should be stated instead that you will try one more time than the student thinks you will. Assuming that you develop a good relationship with the student, and he knows you are personally involved with him, you go right back and deal with present behavior, make no value judgements, try to agree on another plan, get a commitment, accept no excuses when a student doesn't meet the commitment, and never give up. Have you tried to give up smoking? I made three hundred commitments to myself that I was going to quit smoking. On that three hundredth try, I gave up smoking. One of the things I try to impress upon staff and students is that we cannot fail if we never give up. We may not be successful today, tomorrow, or a year from now, but we cannot fail if we never give up.

The final step is probably the most difficult for educators. The final step is: No punishment. If you call me a name and I slap you, we are even, but that is not going to help you change your behavior. There must be clear consequences to behavior. A student who hits a teacher must know what the consequences of his behavior are, and these must be enforced. Clear consequences of which the student is aware prior to selecting his behavior are not considered punishment. Punishment is something that either is not commensurate with what the student has done, or something of which

the student was not aware prior to choosing a behavior. For example, the student who was truant the day before is now suspended for three days. If at your school you feel that suspension is an appropriate and effective response to the truancy problem, and the students know that not attending school will result in suspension, this would not be considered punishment. As stated, it is also important that whatever the consequence, it not be out of line with the behavior with which you are attempting to deal--for example, being suspended from school for a week as a result of missing one class.

Some of the other successful techniques that we must integrate into the curriculum if we are going to work with disruptive students include teaching them some of the skills we have had to learn from trial and error; being able to cope with frustration; being able to take a position, and being able to defend that decision; being able to express our concern about a matter in an appropriate way; seeking different opinions; and perhaps going all through an appeals procedure to try to resolve a problem. These are skills students who are disruptive must have in their program if they are to modify their behavior and be successful.

I would propose that there are only four ways people learn. The first method I would call "Ouch"--trial and error. You put your hand into a fire and you get burned. The second method I call "Stick and carrot"--if you want this, you will do that for me. The third is what I call "Watch me"--modelling behavior. If you want to do what I am doing, simply watch me. The fourth and final method is what I call "Ah ha!"--insight. An individual begins to examine his behavior and some of the reasons for the behavior, and gains insight as to why he behaves the way he does.

I believe the principal's position is the most important within the educational structure. Principals are change agents. Principals are individuals who set expectations for many different people. Not only that, the expectations they set have far-reaching effects. As I indicated earlier, principals are working with people who will determine what the world is to become, not what it is. It is important for us as principals to analyze our attitudes toward disruptive, deviant, streetwise students. That is

a very difficult thing to do. While school staff members no doubt know exactly a principal's attitude toward disruptive students, it is much more difficult for the principal to analyze his/her own attitudes. Sometimes when we do analyze our attitudes we say we are interested in all kids, that they are all important, but frequently our behavior says something very different.

You have all heard about theory X and theory Y people. The theory X people think you must protect yourself; people are bad and the only way to get through the world is to protect yourself by getting the other person before he gets you. On the other hand, theory Y people believe that people are basically good. They display alot of trust and confidence that people will make the right decision. This has been stated in another way, as in the theory of the dipper and the bucket. The theory goes something like this: Some people walk around the world trying always to fill up their bucket by dipping their dipper into other peoples' buckets. They hypothesize that if they can get enough form someone else's bucket they can fill their own up. The problem with this is that no matter how much they dip into someone else's bucket, their own never gets filled. On the other hand, the other group of people is always giving away from their buckets, yet theirs always seem to be overflowing.

I am sure we all know people who fit into these categories. Those who have a bucket overflowing are going around patting people on the back, telling them what they are doing right, trying to help them set higher goals and expectations. The other group will call any mistake to your attention. When you spill your coffee, one of these individuals will say, "You spilled your coffee." Anyone of us who has spilled coffee knows that we spilled the coffee before the other person called it to our attention. These constant critics do not have a good bottom in their bucket. No matter how much they dip into someone else's bucket, they will never fill their bucket up.

Often as educators we must look at the problem and say to ourselves, is it a problem within the student, or is this a problem within the teacher? As we begin to work with our staff members, we must realize that there are some people who can't do what we ask them to do. This means that they don't

have the skill; that they need training or some type of support. There is another group of people who don't understand what we want. In this case the problem is with us. We have not communicated clearly with the staff. It is not a problem that these people can't solve, nor is it that they need more training; it is simply a problem of the people not knowing what we want. The final group of people would fit into what I call the "I won't" category. That means, "I understand what you want and I have the skill to do it, but I will not change my present behavior."

As principals working with these individuals it is important for us to make sure that we know what the problem is. It won't help if we are going to include inservice training when the problem is one of philosophy or attitude. It is also important that we, as principals, analyze our behavior. Do we dip into other people's buckets or are we trying to fill up other people's buckets? Are we a theory X or a theory Y person? What is our attitude toward deviant or disruptive students? Another important aspect is to be sure we have given the teachers some of the tools and leadership they must have if we are to work with this type of student.

There are no easy answers on how we teach respect for authority, emotional control, or task orientation. In today's world I don't think we can debate whether or not it is the school's job to do this--I believe it is. But where in our curriculum? What materials can we buy to teach these skills? How do you change a person's thinking from a powerless person to a powerful person? It may be true that the people who go into education are people looking for power. It may be true that they are people who have been successful in school; but I don't believe that means they cannot be people who can teach children who are unsuccessful in school to achieve success within the school environment. I believe that the principal and every teacher must be an actor, not a reactor. And finally, I believe that children are our future.

I would like to close by sharing with you what I consider to be an extremely effective and important statement about children and education, a statement made a century ago by Abraham Lincoln:

> A child is a person who is going to carry on what you have started. He is going to sit where you are sitting, and when you are gone, tend to those things which you think are important. You may adopt all the policies you can, but how they are carried out depends on him. He will assume control of your cities, states, and nation. He is going to move in and take over your churches, schools, universities, and corporations. The fate of humanity is in their hands.

As George Benson states in the song, "Children Are Our Future." Our most important responsibility is to teach them to demonstrate mature, responsible behavior. This is best achieved by helping students to love and to feel good about themselves. In order to love and feel good about yourself, you have to attain success. We must accept the challenge of helping these youngsters, these deviant, disruptive youngsters, find success within our school buildings. That is our responsibility.